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The MAGPIE, or the MAID.

THE
MAGPIE OR THE MAID?

A Melo Drame,

IN THREE ACTS.

TRANSLATED AND ALTERED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY I. POCOCK, ESQ.

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden,

ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1815.

THE MUSIC COMPOSED BY MR. BISHOP.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MILLER, 25, BOW-STREET,
COVENT-GARDEN;

By B. M'Millan, Bow-Street, Covent Garden.

1815.

[Price Two Shillings.]

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

<i>Gerald, a wealthy Farmer, ...</i>	Mr. Fawcett.
<i>Henry, his Son, ...</i>	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Erard, a Soldier: Annette's Father, ...</i>	} Mr. Barrymore.
<i>ther, ...</i>	
<i>Martin, Godson and Servant to Mr. and Mrs. Gerald, ...</i>	} Mr. Liston.
<i>Mr. and Mrs. Gerald, ...</i>	
<i>Malcour, Justice of the Village, ...</i>	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Benjamin, a Jew Pedlar, ...</i>	Mr. Farley.
<i>Bertrand, Keeper of the Prison, ...</i>	Mr. Atkins.
<i>George, Malcour's Servant, ...</i>	Mr. Howell.
<i>Dame Gerald, ...</i>	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Annette, distantly related to the Farmer and his Wife, their Servant, ...</i>	} Miss Booth.
<i>Farmer and his Wife, their Servant, ...</i>	

Soldiers, Officers of Police, Peasantry, &c.

The SCENE lies at Palaiseau, a Village not far from Paris—The time, comprises part of an Evening, and the Morning of the succeeding Day.

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THE MAGPIE,

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ACT I.

The Court-yard of a substantial Farm-house: The House is seen on the right—Trees on the left, and a Fence (in which is a Gate) at the back—beyond it a sloping Hill, and the distant Country.—In the front of the Scene, on one of the Trees, a Cage, in which is a tame Magpie.

Pie. Martin! Martin!

Mar. I'm coming—(*Enters*) Hey! what, no body here!—O Lord, O Lord! the waiter at the White Horse, in our village, leads the life of a gentleman, compared to mine. I've had a tightish half-hour's work—fed the sheep, the pigs, the poultry, the horned cattle, and our big dog;—swept out the barn, killed a dozen rats, cut three trusses of hay—thrashed a sack of wheat, and been thrashed myself—for idling away my time—I don't wonder they call my godmother an active woman.

B

(*Music—He goes into the House—Annette appears on the Hill, and descends—the Magpie comes from the Cage on a perch, and calls, “Martin, Martin!”—as the Music ceases, Martin runs from the House*).

Mar. Coming, coming! I'm coming and going, from morning till night, like a short stage. (*Annette appears at the Gate.*)—O, 'twas Annette—To think of such a girl as that being servant at a farm! It's a down-right shame.

Ann. Ah, Martin, are you there?—(*Coming forward.*)

Mar. Yes, Annette, I'm here and there, and every where—a servant never stays long in a place, where my godmother is—she's like a squirrel in a cage—never stirs but she sets her whole house in motion—ferrets me about just as she pleases.

Ann. But she does it all for your good, you know.

Mar. So she tells me—She beat me in the barn just now, and said I ought to be very much obliged to her—she insists upon it, that knocking me down now and then is the only way to bring me up properly. But what did you call me for, Annette?

Ann. I!—I didn't call you.

Mar. No!

Pie. Martin! Martin!

Mar. Oh, you bla'guard! (*Seeing the Bird.*) That plaguy Magpie is always making merry at my expence.

Ann. So, 'twas old Margery, after all.

Mar. As Mr. Malcour, our Magistrate, says, when he's about justice business, I wonder the tom-cat hasn't taken cognizance of that Magpie's

demerits, and brought her to condign punishment.

Ann. While Margery has her liberty, there's no fear of her being hurt, poor thing.

Mar. Poor thing! Why, she's a nuisance, no one has a moment's peace or quiet for her; she's so cunning and so spiteful, and such a devil of a glutton!—do you know that bird will tuck down pretty near as much as would serve me for a lunch.

Ann. Ha! ha! ha!

Pie. Ha! ha! ha!

Mar. There! always mocking people. Ey! you mischievous monkey.

Ann. Don't be angry, don't hurt her, Martin.

Mar. Why, one wouldn't go to set one's wit to a poor bird, you know; but godmother says Mag has more wit than I have—O she does—and thinks her company more entertaining and agreeable too.

Ann. Never mind, Martin, I think your company very agreeable and entertaining; but I mustn't enjoy it any longer, for I've a great many things to do, so good bye, Martin, good bye (*Music—Annette enters the House.*)

Mar. Good bye, Annette. O bless you! That's the kindest soul in the village—every body loves her—and so do I—pity she has such examples before her as my godmother, and Margery here, —(*Going to the Magpie.*) Eh! you nasty little pyebald giggler.

Dame G. (*Coming from the House.*) Make haste, Annette, make haste, and get every thing in order—Oh, I'm so delighted, so overjoyed! In one hour more our dear child, our dear Henry will be with us again—but where is that lazy fellow, Martin?

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Mar. Oh, oh!—(*Magpie bites him.*)

Dame G. What, you are there, are you, teasing my bird again!

Mar. Confound her, she has bit me to the bone.

Dame G. And served you right,—why don't you leave her alone, pretty creature.

Mar. Devilish pretty! looks like a chimney-sweep pelted with snow-balls.

Dame G. Go, run, prepare the great table, and lay it out under those trees—now I think of it, 'twill be more convenient, for the farmer has invited all his friends to welcome home our Henry.

Mar. What, Henry coming home?

Dame G. Yes, Martin, we expect him this very evening, and I'm so happy, that I don't think I shall scold you again—

Mar. No!

Dame G. No, not till to-morrow—'tis now six years since he was a soldier, and nearly two since I have seen him—but he shall never leave me again.

Mar. Oh, how I shall love to hear him tell all about the wars—how many times he covered him-self with glory, and how many wounds he received in battle.

Dame G. Wounds!

Mar. Yes, but I hope he has got no scars upon his face, godmother, for he was very handsome, you know, and it would be a pity if he was to come back with a broken head.

Dame G. Go along, you stupid fellow, or you shall have a broken head of your own.

Mar. I'm going, godmother.

(*Music—Farmer Gerald appears at the back, rolling a cask of Wine.*)

Ger. Martin, come here, my boy, and lend a hand.

Mar. I'm coming, godfather.

Dame G. What have you got there, husband?

Ger. Comfort—a cask of wine, good wife.

(*Martin helps him to set up the Cask.*)

Dame G. A nine gallon cask! Oh, it's too much.

Ger. Not a drop—I'm determined they shall have their skins full, to make a day's sport go off swimmingly—there's nothing like good wine to set them afloat—I've order'd some fiddlers too for the girls.

Mar. Some fiddlers! Oh then, they must have their skins full too, for a fiddler without drink is as bad as his bow without rozin.

Dame G. I'll rozin you, you blockhead, if you don't go and mind your business—(*Martin goes off*)—Can't get one of them to do any thing for me—I'm oblig'd to think, and to talk, till I quite tire myself.

Ger. Yes, and tire me into the bargain. If you would but think a little more, and talk a little less, it would improve my health and your temper wonderfully.

(*When Martin goes off, the preparations for the Supper begin, and Martin is continually on and off the Stage, directing the Servants, and attending to the conversation in front.*)

Dame G. Temper! my temper!—Mr. Gerald, I defy you to find a woman with more mildness, more patience, more good nature—

Mar. Ha! ha! ha!—Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Dame G. What are you laughing at, Sirrah?

Mar. Oh—I—I was only laughing at your mag—your Magpie, godmother.

Dame G. Then there's Annette, another dawdle—quite as idle as the rest—

Ger. Come, come, wife, that's not true; Annette is a worthy good girl; exact in her duty, and obliging in her disposition

Dame G. Yes, obliging with a vengeance!—she hardly gives me time to mention my orders, before they are executed—I don't like that—Now, Martin I can scold twenty times a day, and whenever I lay a stick across his back it does me as much good as it does him; it circulates the blood, and makes me feel quite alive.

Mar. Does it,—I wish you'd get another doctor, tho'—

Dame G. The fact is, you have half spoilt the girl—"my good Annette," and, "my charming Annette"—O' my conscience, every body seems in love with her.—I verily believe that old fool, Mr. Malcour, the Justice, has taken a fit of fondness for her now.

Ger. Pho! Malcour's a rascal; he never was fond of any thing but himself—a mere pettifogging attorney, who, by art and chicanery, has screw'd himself into the Commission, and is as much a disgrace to the situation he now holds, as he was to the honourable profession he was bred to—But listen, wife—

Dame G. Listen!

Ger. Yes, you have talk'd yourself out of breath, and I think it's my turn now.

Dame G. Well, husband, well—

Ger. That girl must no longer be considered as a servant in this house—Her mother was my relation; and tho' her death has made Annette dependant upon us, and unavoidable misfortunes have forced her father to become a soldier, it is

my duty, and should be your pleasure, to honour the parent who has shed his blood in the service of his country, and shew kindness to the child bequeathed to our care and protection.

Dame G. Well, well, as you say—Poor Mr. Granville!—Ah! his wife was a kind-hearted soul.

Ger. Well, my dear, I have been thinking, when Henry returns—

Dame G. That's well thought of, indeed—if we take a walk over the hill, we shall see him a full quarter of an hour sooner—Annette! I'll just speak a word to her—

Ger. First let me speak a word to you—I have a plan to marry Henry.

Dame G. How! marry! softly there, Mr. Gerald, if you please—that affair belongs entirely to me—I'll tell you who Henry shall marry—

Pie. Annette! Annette!

Ger. Egad, Mag has hit it—she is the very person.

Dame G. What, Annette!

Enter ANNETTE.

Ann. Here, Ma'am—did you call? What are your commands?

Ger. Pretty little soul!—Look at her (*to Mrs. Ger. apart*).

Dame G. Pshaw, nonsense! I won't hear of such a thing (*Aside to Ger.*)—Now the cloth is laid, Annette, you may place the silver, and the napkins on it. I shall go and fetch the plate-basket myself. But be careful that none of them are mislaid—don't let it be as it was my last birthday, when a silver fork was lost.

Ann. Be assured, Madam, I shall take every care of them—that fork has caused me so much uneasiness, so much trouble—

Mar. So it has me—I've hunted for that devilish fork till I've dream'd of it.

Dame G. Ah! it was a strange piece of business—

Ger. Pshaw! a trifle—no great loss.

Dame G. Well, I'll soon be here with the others, but don't be impatient, husband. I shall be back again in a minute. [*Exit.*]

Ger. You need not hurry yourself, my dear. Annette, what ails you? don't be cast down, my good girl.

Ann. If I could but see that fork again, it would be a great comfort.

Ger. Would it not comfort you quite asmuch to see my son Henry again?

Ann. Oh no—yes—yes certainly; every one must rejoice at the return of so good a son, and so kind a friend, if he be not alter'd, Sir—he is the very picture of you.

Ger. Humph! rather a flattering likeness of the original, I believe—but suppose I was to make you a present of the portrait—

Ann. Mr. Gerald!—me!—

Ger. Yes, my dear Annette, you—Henry has hid nothing from his father, and I have consider'd, that the greatest reward I can bestow upon his sincerity, is the hand of an amiable and virtuous girl.

Ann. Oh, Sir—this goodness!—but, if (*hesitating*)—

Ger. Ah—an *if* and a *but*—I know what's coming—doubt and difficulty always precede the name of Mrs. Gerald;—but leave her to me; I'll manage *her*, at least I'll try—she's really a good woman at heart, tho' it puzzles people to find it out.

Dame GERALD enters with the Plate Basket, &c.

Dame G. Here they are (*Giving things to Annette.*)—Now, husband, let us make haste—Martin!

Mar. Coming, godmother. (*Advancing.*)

Ger. You run on, my good lad, and look out for him.

Mar. Going, godfather. (*Goes off through the Gate.*)

Ger. Annette, my dear girl, we shall soon re-return (*Shaking her hand.*)

Dame G. There, there, that's enough—you are not going to leave her for a twelvemonth—

(*Music—Martin is seen on the Hill—Gerald holds the hand of Annette—Dame drags him on impatiently, and Annette begins to lay Forks and Spoons upon the Table from the Basket.*)

Ann. Every thing this day conspires to make me happy—Henry, my own dear Henry, returns in safety, and all my fondest hopes are realized—My father too, how this event will rejoice his fond, his affectionate heart!—he may perhaps be present at our wedding; for when he wrote to thank me for the money I had sent him from my little earnings, he said his regiment would soon return to Paris.

(*Music—Benjamin coming down the Hill.*)

Benj. Here is peautiful scissars and knives—here's elegant silver buckles and cold vatches—all new from Paris.

Ann. Ah, 'tis poor Benjamin the Jew Pedlar—I can buy nothing of him this year.

Benj. Pless ma soul, is dere no pody at home? (*Looking over the Fence*).

Ann. No one but me, Benjamin.

Benj. Ah, 'ma pretty tear, my cood Annette. (*Enters the Gate*).—But is 'te pig dog at home? (*Looking about*). De last time I travelled this way, that rogue Martin let him loose, and frightened me out of my vits.

Ann. You will find no custom at the farm this time, Benjamin: Mr. and Mrs. Gerald are from home.

Benj. Dat's a great pity—they'll never have such another opportunity again—Look! here's peautiful tings, all vat I brought from Paris.

Ann. I'm sorry you should lose your labour.

Benj. So am I—grieved to the very soul—but vont you, ma tear, purchase some trifle?

Ann. I am totally without money.

Benj. Pless ma heart, that is great misfortune—you must be very miserable.

Ann. I never was so happy.

Benj. Happy mitout de monish!—oh, 'tis impossible.

Ann. Not at all, Benjamin, for I gave all I had to comfort my father.

Benj. Ey—you give all vat you got to comfort your parents—dat's cood girl, dat's cood girl—let me put it down in one of my little pocket-books—vat day vas it you gave em?

Ann. The last day of August—I remember it well—for that day twelvemonth my poor mother died—

Benj. Died!—your mother!—poor child, poor child!—dere, keep that little almanack for my sake.

Ann. Nay, Benjamin—

Benj. Take it, take it—it will do me more

cood as if you paid me double price—and when ever you look at the day when you parted from your monish to assist your father, I hope you will not blush to remember the praises and admirations of a poor old Jew.

Ann. 'Tis impossible to refuse it now.

Benj. That's right, my loff—I make it a rule never to refuse any ting.

Ann. Thank you, Benjamin, thank you kindly.

Benj. Ma tear, I'm very much obliged to you for your custom. If de family should vant any ting in my vay, tell them I lodges at te Vite Horse in te Village. (*Shouts of Peasants*). Ey, what a swarm of people's on te hill, and dat rogue Martin, as I hope to be shaved—Cood bye, ma tear.

(*Music—Martin is seen coming down the Hill —the Jew going from the Gate, runs against him*).

Mar. Oh!—

Benj. I beg you ten tousand pardons, Sir.

[*Exit Benjamin.*]

Ann. Well, Martin, well—

Mur. Oh! that Jew has run his pack into the pit of my stomach, and knock'd out every bit of breath in my body.

Ann. Is he coming, is Henry coming?

Mar. Yes, and half the village into the bargain. I saw him first—"How are you?" says he. I'm charming, says I. Then he squeezed my hand till it look'd like the foot of a duck. And "how's is Annette?" says he. She's charming too, says I.—Then he flew into my arms, just as you mean to fly into his. Here they come.

(*Music—They descend the Hill—Martin beckons toward the House—Servants enter*

with Dishes, and place them on the Table
—Henry, &c. appear at the Gate).

Hen. Annette, my dear Annette!

(Embracing her).

Ann. Henry!—

Mar. I thought how it would be.

Dame G. Annette, what are you about? is there nothing to be done but shaking hands, and—

Ger. Now then dispatch! bustle, bustle!—Wife, if you wish to see your boy happy, let him speak to Annette without interruption.

Dame G. But I don't approve of so much tenderness and civility.

Ger. Why you have very little taste that way, I confess; but depend upon it, the surest method to make Henry comfortable is to make that girl so. Come, come—

(Gerald pulls her away—she looks disturb'd, but retires to Table—during this Annette has shewn Henry the Cross, which hangs at her neck).

Hen. Yes, I remember, it was my parting pledge of constancy. Oh, my beloved Annette, I knew not half your power till we parted. Then, secure in your affection, I possessed a charm that soothed me in your absence, comforted me in sickness, and inspired me in the battle!

Ger. Martin, broach this jolly dog, and bleed him a bit.

Mar. That I will, till he's a dead man, god-father. I'll soon doctor him.

Dame G. Come, Henry, come, you shall sit by me—now, Mr. Gerald—and where is Mr. Malcour? where is his Worship? not come!—he was surely invited.

Ger. Never mind him, his *Worship* will come long before he's wanted. Annette, you take his

place—Martin is Master of the Ceremonies, remember. (*He sits at Table*).

Mar. Now, lads and lasses, begin the dance; tune up, pipers, and I'll wet your whistles for you—

[*Ballet.*]

(*They have seated themselves at the Table—Martin taps the Wine-cask, and makes himself merry among the group. At the conclusion, Gerald rises from Table, the rest follow*).

Ger. 'Tis well, friends, very well—in the Orchard you may pursue your sports—Martin will take care of you.

Mar. That I will, and take care of myself too—come along, girls, we'll have a rare game of blindman's-buff under the apple trees—nobody will interrupt us, for godmother never comes there, for fear of getting the lumbago—come along. (*Music and Peasants go off with him*).

Dame G. Now, my boy, we'll go into the parlour, and there you shall tell us all that has happened for the last two years.

Hen. But Annette, mother—

Ger. Aye, aye, let her come with us.

Dame G. Well, she has only to fold the napkins, and count up the plate, and when she has done that she may come.

Ger. That's right, that's well said. Henry, my boy, you are welcome home; and ere long I trust I shall see you married, and as happy as (*looking at Annette, and then suddenly casting his eye upon Mrs. G.*) as your father—Come, wife.

(*Music—They go into the House, Henry kissing his hand to Annette. She begins to collect the things at the Table.—Evrard,*

wrapped in a Cloak, with hat pulled over his eyes, descends the Hill, and enters cautiously—She counts the articles till the Music stops).

Ev. She is alone—it is, it is my child!

Ann. Ah, Henry! how fervently he swore to make me happy.

Ev. Happy! and I come!—Oh my poor girl!

(Groans).

Ann. A stranger, and distressed!—how can I serve you?

Ev. Annette!

Ann. Father!

(She throws back on the Table the last Spoon she was placing in the Basket, and flies into his arms).

Ev. Hush!

Ann. I cannot suppress my joy—your appearance, so unexpected—so—

Ev. Speak lower, I entreat.

Ann. What is there to fear! There are none here but friends.

Ev. Friends that I must not endanger—Annette, listen to me—on our arrival at Paris, I immediately requested of my Captain a furlough for two days, that I might once again embrace my child. Owing to caprice, or perhaps necessity, he refused me; I persisted; he reprimanded—I reproached him with cruelty, no doubt in terms as unbecoming as my passion, till at length irritated by my audacity, he raised his cane to strike me. Furious at being thus publicly disgraced, I for a moment forgot the subordination of a soldier, drew my sword upon him, and was arrested—

Ann. But you were pardon'd?—Oh, yes, yes.

Ev. Not so—the fault I have committed, by the law of arms, is punishable by death.

Ann. Death !

Ev. A Court-martial immediately was assembled—the law is explicit ; and ere this the sentence is pronounced.

Ann. Is there no hope ?—

Ev. None, but in flight. With what remained of the money you last sent me, I procured this cloak, and by the assistance of a faithful comrade, eluded the sentinel that guarded me, and quitted Paris at day-break this morning.

Ann. Remain here ; you will be no where so safe as with me :—Mr. Gerald will protect you.

Ev. He must not, dares not—the Magistrate of the village will no doubt receive directions to secure me as a deserter. No—Gérald might involve himself on my account, and I will never expose to danger that man who has proved a second father to my child. Promise me, swear to me, never to reveal this fatal secret.

Ann. Not to your kinsman ?

Ev. Not to a human being.

Ann. 'Tis dreadful, but 'tis my duty—you desire it, and I *swear I never will*.

Ev. Enough, my heart is relieved—the condemnation of the poor soldier Evrard, by which fictitious title I am only known in the regiment, will excite no enquiries, no compassion, and the name of Granville may yet descend to thee—unspotted, undisgraced.

Ann. Oh father !—since nothing but escape and an eternal exile can secure you, we will quit this place together. Tho' all the world deserts you, your daughter never shall. I'll watch over you incessantly ; share with you every danger, and if at last the fatal blow should fall, together it shall strike us, and I'll die with transport, receiving the last blessing of my dear, dear father.

Ev. (*Holding her to his bosom*).—Affectionate child!—unfortunate Granville! No, Annette, I must forego this pious sacrifice—your disappearance at the farm would excite suspicions, and instead of aiding my escape, would but increase my danger.

Ann. Ah!—I hear footsteps—hide your uniform—quick, quick—

Ev. I have yet one thing to ask, that is indispensable—

Ann. 'Tis too late—'tis Malcour, 'tis the Justice—recline upon that table—

(*Music—Evrard sits, as Malcour opens the Gate and advances*).

Mal. So, so—there she is, all alone and lovely, like the first flower in spring—I am arrived very opportunely. Miss Annette, I'm yours—hope you'll soon be mine.

Ann. Your servant, Sir.

Mal. Sweet soul! what lips, and what an eye! (*Aside.*) Truly sorry I couldn't do honour to the farmer's good cheer. Am come now full of papers and apologies; but its always a rule with me, that pleasure should be sacrificed to business.

Ann. You will find Mr. Gerald in the house, Sir.

Mal. Humph! wish he had been further off—what a lovely creature!

Ann. Here, good man, drink—Pretend to sleep. (*Aside to Evrard.*)

Mal. Who's that?

Ann. A traveller, who, who—

Mal. Aye, who is he?

Ann. He begged repose, and wine to cheer him—I have granted his request.

Mal. Kind soul! I wish you'd grant my request, and cheer me.

Ann. That person—I mean, that table, is in great disorder, and I must not leave—

Mal. I perceive the feast is finished; but there are pretty pickings left. Oh! that I might taste!

Ann. Mr. Justice, (*indignantly*) this discourse offends me;—those papers may be of consequence—I will not detain you.

Mal. Oh, there's no hurry—I'll stay with you with pleasure.

Ann. I thought, Sir, you made it a rule always to sacrifice *pleasure* to *business*.

Mal. Hem! cross-examin'd, and bother'd—

Enter GEORGE, at upper end.

—Must drop the suit at present, and move for a new trial. Now, my love, my charmer—(*Seeing George*)—What do you want? Eh!

Geo. This packet has just arrived at the Office, and the Clerk desired me to give it to your Worship instantly. He says its of great consequence.

Mal. Indeed! who brought it?

Geo. A horseman from the War Council at Paris.

Ann. (*Aside*). From the War Council! (*Looking at Evrard, who betrays emotion*).

Mal. That's enough—You may go. (*Exit George*). Now, let me see. “Mr. Justice”—Hum—“Description—soldier—Evrard!”—So, so, a deserter!

Ann. Heavens!

Mal. Eh! why, where are my spectacles? very careless indeed! left my spectacles at home.

Ann. Had you not better return home for them, Sir?

Mal. No, no, 'tis only the description of a deserter—And you shall read for me.

Ann. I—I shall at least know the truth. (*Aside*).

Mal. Come, begin—

Ann. “I address to you the description of a soldier belonging to the regiment of Champagne, who by a Court-martial was this morning condemn'd to death.” (*Voice broken and agitated*).

Ev. Death!

Mal. Hum!—serious business, truly—Tender-hearted soul!

Ann. Ah! if I read what follows, he is lost!
“ Fifty-two years of age, five feet eleven”—

Mal. It quite overpowers her. Let me try again; perhaps—

Ann. Oh no, I'll go on, Sir—Assist me, Heaven! “ He is called Evrard,—aged *twenty-five*”—

Mal. Twenty-five—a young offender.

Ann. “ Five feet *two* inches high—blue eyes, light hair, fair complexion”—

Mal. A likely fellow too; now, I'll warrant he has brought himself into this predicament for the sake of some pretty girl or other. But his dress—read that—that's of the utmost importance.

Ann. His dress! “ Blue uniform—facings scarlet—gaiters white.”

(*Evrard throws open his Cloak—Annette looking alternately at him and the description, states every particular precisely contrary*).

Mal. 'Tis well. (*Taking paper and folding it*) I must forward copies of this without loss of time—Eh! (*seeing Evrard, who drops to his position on the Table*)—That's not one of our neighbours

—I don't remember him—Egad, it may be!—
Friend! (*pats him on the shoulder*)—

Ann. Powers of mercy!

Mal. Stand up, if you please—Now, take off your hat.

Ann. I sink with terror!

Mal. Twenty-five years of age, five feet two—light hair, white uniform—hein! very like the description truly! that will do; fellow, you may go

Ann. He is saved—You may depart now, good man. (*Music.*)—Conceal yourself behind those trees (*aside*).

(*Music—Evrard goes behind them as Malcour ties up papers.*)

Mal. So, here is something in my way at last. Hope I shall catch the fellow in my district—touch the reward, and then—Ah! my lovely Annette! if you would but consent to make me happy, and seal the bargain by a kiss (*advancing*),

Ev. Wretch!

Mal. Wretch! who was that, that dared—

Ann. The—the—only the bird, Sir, (*pointing to the Magpie*).

Mal. That impudent Magpie! you should really teach him better manners, but, adieu!—remember—you promise (*advancing*).

Ann. No, Sir, do not leave me in that wilful error—I have too much regard for my character, ever to become your wife.

Mal. Wife! whew! amazing!—do you know who I am?

Ann. Yes, Sir, you are a *Justice*.

Mal. And do you dare? I'm amaz'd and confounded! a menial—a servant, talk thus to Christophè Athanius Jean Bâptiste Malcour, Justice of

Palaiseau—never met with such cool impudence in the whole course of my practice (*Music—He goes off muttering*).

Ann. Now, now—you had something still to say, of consequence.

Ev. (*Who at Malcour's exit, advances from the trees*)—I am without money!

Ann. (*Clasps her hands in despair*)—And I at this moment have nothing!

Ev. You, I know, have given me all that you possess'd. And this is, now, my last resource. (*He gives Annette a Case, from which she draws a Silver Spoon*). It was the gift of your dear, dear mother.

Ann. My mother! (*In tears*).

Ev. I did hope never to have parted with it; but hard necessity will have it so, and you must endeavour to sell it by to-morrow morning at the latest, and be careful to sell it secretly—*secretly*, mind—

Ann. (*With sudden recollection, and apart*). Yes, it shall be done—Benjamin, no doubt, will purchase it.

Ev. On the road-side, a short distance from the village, there stands an old tree, a willow, which time has excavated—

Ann. I know it well. (*She puts the Spoon in her Pocket*).

Ev. In the hollow of that tree, deposit the money it produces, and, one hour after day-break, let me be sure to find it—farewell, my dear child! Heaven guard and bless you! Perhaps this kiss may be the last you ever may receive from your unfortunate, your unhappy parent!

Ann. Oh, father! (*Throws herself into his arms*).

(*Music*—Evrard releases himself, goes towards the Gate—she follows him—they again embrace, and part—Annette drops on her knee, and implores protection for her Father, who ascends the Hill.—At this instant the Magpie perches on the Table, and flies away with a Silver Spoon).

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

The Parlour in the Farmer's House—In the front a Door; on the right a large Window, the Shutters closed.—A Buffet, on which is the Basket of Pate—Chairs and a Table, with Glasses, &c. in confusion, and the Magpie's Cage hanging in one corner of the Room.

Music—ANNETTE discovered, she listens while the Clock is heard to strike five.

Ann. Five o'clock! (*She opens the Door*). 'Tis broad day-light, and still the Jew does not arrive—unfortunate! My poor father will seek in the appointed spot for the money—and—oh cruel disappointment! (*Music—She opens the Window, and throws back the Shutters; the Scene then becomes perfectly light*). How unlucky, that Benjamin should be absent when I call'd last night at his lodgings. I hope he will receive my message—if not—ah!—

(*Music*). BENJAMIN enters.

Benj. Vell, ma tear, vat you vant mit me?

Ann. I am rejoiced that you are come.

Benj. Very extraordinary time in te mornings, ma tear, for me to be summon'd to attend a young lady. I would not have left ma ped at preak of tay for any pody but yourself.

Ann. I thank you, Benjamin: but to business—

Benj. O, is it pusiness? Dat is quite anoder ting; but, pless ma heart, I have left ma pack.

Ann. (*Anxiously*). You have not left your money?

Benj. (*Significantly*). No! I never leaves ma monish.

Ann. Then give me some instantly, good Benjamin.

Benj. Ey!

Ann. I have the most urgent necessity.

Benj. Every pody vat I meets tell me they have urgent necessities for de monish.

Ann. I require only the value of this—(*Taking the Spoon from her Pocket*).

Benj. A shilver spoon! ah, dat is cood—I'm very fond of shilver spoons—dare say I can afford to give a crown.

Ann. Only a crown! not half it's value, Benjamin.

Benj. You're no judge, ma tear,—as I am an honesht man, I'll use you vell. (*Weighs Spoon in his hand*)—Ah! he is fine fat fellow—he is more heavy as I thought—I'll give you two crowns—there now!

Ann. Surely you find it worth more than two.

Benj. Not to leave a profit—(*Annette turns*

away dejected)—Poor ting! she seems very much distressed—I don't know how it is, but I never can drive a cood pargain mit a young girl vat has got tears in her eyes.

Ann. (Aside). 'Tis a mere trifle—but I must not reject it. Well, I trust entirely to you.

Benj. Trust me!—now, dat is very strange—nopody ever trust me before.—Vell, vell—there is three crowns of six livres—one, two, tree—there, ma loff—that is te full value—take it, take it—and I'll look for te profit somewhere else!

Ann. Thank you, bless you! but leave me now:—should any one surprise you here—

Benj. Dat's very true—I shall go home to ma lodgings immediately. If I don't make haste, somepody vill surprise ma pack, and I shall be ruined.—(*He goes out, and is seen through the window to meet Martin.*)

Ann. Now then I must hasten to the willow—I shall be just in time—ah!—(*Music*).

MARTIN enters.

Mar. Why, Annette, you seem to have taken a fancy to that Jew—but there is no accounting for taste.

Ann. I was only speaking to him about—about—

Mar. Ah! so I suppose—but Master Henry won't like his nose to be put out of joint by old Benjamin's beard.

Ann. The truth is, I wanted a little money, and as he happen'd to pass—(*She puts the Money in her Pocket*).

Mar. Oh! I understand—you called him in to sell some trinket or other—but why didn't you ask me?

Ann. I knew you were unable to assist me.

Mar. Then you knew nothing of the matter; for tho' I have not a penny in my pocket, I have plenty in my box. You never saw my box? There's a hole in the top, where I slip in the money, and when Christmas comes round, I break it open, and count up—that's where I keep the new half crown piece you gave me, and if I had known you were in want—Lord! you should have had it and welcome.

Ann. (Impatiently). Well, good Martin, the next time—'tis getting late, I must go!

Mar. So must I, there's Mag not hung up at the window yet—besides, my godmother will be stirring presently; and when she stirs, she seldom stops. *(Goes to the Cage, and hangs it out of the Window)*—She and her darling here, will soon begin their daily labours.

Ann. At last I shall escape—If I can reach the place in time, all may be well.

(Music).

Enter HENRY.

Hen. Annette! my dear Annette, so early from your bed?—And Martin too?

Mar. Lord bless you! Martin never gets a wink o'sleep after day-light—your mother takes care of that—she turn'd away the poor old dung-hill cock, to have the pleasure of crowing me up herself.

Dame G. (Without). Martin!

Mar. I told you so—Coming!—Shall I tell Henry of old Benjamin's beard?—Well, I won't, I won't; I hate to make mischief, like my godmother and old Margery.

Dame G. Martin! Martin!

Mar. Coming, godmother—yes, yes, the game is begun. *[Exit Martin.]*

Hen. Now I may speak to you without reserve—I have much to tell you, dear Annette.

Ann. But why so early? I scarcely expected—hoped—

Hen. I could not sleep—the pleasure of being at home, the delight of seeing my parents, and above all, the joyful hope of soon calling you wife! banish'd all repose.

Ann. Ah, Henry! I have slept as little as yourself—Oh, my poor father! (*Aside*).

Hen. How's this! Annette?—You are pale, dejected; you have been weeping—but I guess the cause.

Ann. Indeed! (*Alarmed*).

Hen. My mother, perhaps, has—

Ann. Your mother! let him believe so (*Aside*). Ah! I fear she will never receive as daughter the offspring of a poor soldier.

Hen. And what am I but a poor soldier? Is there a state more honourable? 'tis true, I am a step or two higher in rank; but believe me, the child of such a man as Granville will confer honour, not disgrace, in the alliance.

Ann. Yet I tremble! (*Aside*) the hour advances—I *must* leave you for the present, Henry.

Hen. Stay, but a moment—nay, do not agitate your spirits thus. My mother, I am certain, loves me too well, ever to make me miserable, by refusing her consent—See, my father! he too will befriend us.

Enter GERALD.

Ann. (*Clasping her hands*). Another interruption!

Ger. Ah, ah! you rogues—are you met already? I must have over-slept myself—What time is it, Henry?

Her. Almost six, father.

Ann. Six! it will be too late!

Ger. Too late! for what? You'll have plenty of time to put these things in order by and bye. Ah, this love is a sovereign preventive, I find, for sluggishness; but I am so little troubled with the complaint, that I should have snored an hour longer, if your mother's shrill pipe hadn't roused me, bawling after her hopeful godson. (*Annette has endeavoured to reach the Door*)—Heyday! Annette! come here, you little runaway, and don't look so melancholy. I have been thinking, that as Henry has put the question to you, it will now be proper for me to put the question to his mother.

Hen. Do, father, do—for as we have made up our minds, beyond the possibility of altering them—

Ger. Exactly—as we are fully determined to have our own way, I think we may now venture to ask Mrs. Gerald's advice—suppose you speak to her this morning.

Hen. Me, Sir! would it not be more correct that you speak to her?

Ger. Humph! yes—more correct, perhaps, but not quite so agreeable—Eh! Annette! why, what ails the girl?

(*Annette has disengaged her Hand from Gerald, and is just going out at the Door, when Dame Gerald enters*).

Dame. Where are you running to, I should be glad to know—do you think I can put all these things away without help?—Ah, Henry good morrow to you.

Hen. Good morrow, mother.

Dame G. Why, Annette, you stand there like a post—what can you be thinking of—here's all

the plate and glass laying about, just as they were left last night—I never saw any thing like it—(*bustling about*)—Why, husband, can you find nothing to do but look on at this confusion?

Ger. Well, well—I like confusion as little as most people—so I'll leave you.—We must wait till the storm's over—she'll bounce like a roasted chestnut, if you tell her now—but the warmth of her affection will soon soften her heart—Come—

Hen. But Annette—

Ger. She is used to it—besides, the storm will soon be over—

Dame G. What are they whispering about?—(*fixes her eyes upon Gerald and Henry—they perceive it, and exit.*) There is some scheme in hand that they wish to hide from me. Annette, do you know what they were talking about?

Ann. Me, Ma'am—no, Ma'am—

Dame G. That *no*—sounded very like *yes*—but I shall soon find it out. Come, now help me to put every thing in its place again—where is the plate-basket?

Ann. There it is, Ma'am.

Dame G. Oh, I see—let me examine it—(*she talks at the same time that she counts the plate—Annette employed in passing the various articles to her from the Buffet.*) I must confess, it was a charming evening—the men drank, and the girls chatter'd, till I wonder they hadn't a surfeit—Eleven forks, that's all right—Now give me the spoons—Then they danced till the music made my head ach—and drank!—Seven, eight, nine,—a nine gallon cask, and not a drop was left—Ten, eleven—eleven!—How's this? I must have counted wrong—one, two, three, &c. (*beginning in a low tone, and raising it as she proceeds*)—Ten, eleven! eleven! only eleven spoons!—there is one short—lost, I dare say—

Ann. A spoon lost!—

Dame G. O, count them yourself, pray—there are eleven forks, that's right—but there were twelve spoons.

(*Music—Annette counts them*).

Ann. One, two, &c. eleven! I don't find any more—yet I was very particular—

Dame G. I don't at all doubt it—but search, hunt, look in the buffet—look behind it—look every where—(*calls from the window*) Mr. Gerald!—Martin!—

Mar. (*Without*) Coming, godmother.

Dame G. Run and look under the trees where we supped last night—for a silver spoon.

Mar. Going, godmother.

Enter GERALD.

Ger. What's the matter now, wife? are you making all this noise about a silver spoon?

Dame G. Yes, and you know a fortnight ago there was a fork lost—Well, (*To Annette*) I suppose you haven't found it.

Ann. Dear, dear, this is very unfortunate.

Dame G. Certainly, it is very unfortunate, and its very extraordinary too.

Ger. Well, well—it may be found again.

Dame G. Ah, so you said before—but this indifference is not to be endured. I'm determined now to search into the truth, or in a fortnight more something else will be going.

Ger. Your tongue will, I'm certain.

Dame G. Husband, husband,—I believe you wouldn't complain if they were to steal the teeth out of your head.

Ger. Better endure that, than a mind constantly full of suspicion.

Enter MARTIN.

Mar. O godmother, I have it, I have it—

Dame G. Have you?

Mar. Not the spoon, but a thought how it's gone—

Ger. Pshaw!

Dame G. Well, well—

Mar. It's gone to look after the fork—O you may depend upon it—

Dame G. Ey, you stupid—

Mar. Why, Mr. Malcour, the Justice, says the same—for when I told him what had happen'd, says he to me—

Ger. Malcour!—Blockhead, what occasion was there to tell him—it will be all over the village now—

Dame G. So much the better—I am very glad his Worship is come; he'll soon discover who is the thief; for there is no species of wickedness but what Mr. Malcour gets acquainted with, and I require you to do me justice.

Ger. He shall, and every one else concerned. It is now the only way left to stop malicious tongues; and that no one may accuse me of partiality, he shall immediately conduct the examination.

Dame G. Then I shall be satisfied—'tis not so much for the value of the things—all I ask is,—who is the thief?

Pie. Annette! Annette!

Dame G. Ey! (*Pause—Gerald seems disturbed*)—that is very singular. (*Martin comes down the Stage from the door*).

Mar. Here is Mr. Malcour, with a parcel of

beagles at his heels—they are going a man-hunting—a deserter, he says—

Ann. Oh Heavens! if he should have read the Dispatch! (*Aside*).

Ger. Come, come, Annette, you must not apply this business so seriously—Mrs. Gerald has too much sense of propriety to accuse any one—her only motive in urging an examination, is to clear the characters of those in whom she places confidence.

Dame G. Certainly, certainly, I accuse nobody, but I may suspect anybody—

Mar. No, you may not tho'—I'm one of the any-body's—

Dame G. Hold your tongue, simpleton.

(*Music*—*The Justice enters, with his Clerk, and Officers—a few of the Villagers, and two Soldiers*).

Mal. What is all this, Martin has been telling me, about a silver spoon being stolen? Ah, Miss Annette! are you there. I have to return you my thanks for the *accurate* description you read me of the deserter—for 52—read 25—white uniform—facings scarlet—A good joke, wasn't it—but he shall not escape me.

Ger. How's this,—Annette? Have you deceived the Justice? (*Sternly, but in a low voice*).

Ann. It was to save a f—fellow-creature's life.

Ger. Remember this, Annette—there is no vice so dangerous, as that which resembles virtue—retire.

Ann. Cruel, cruel situation! (*Apart*).

Ger. That girl has hurt me, and raised ideas—but—no—It is impossible—Martin, bring pen, ink, and paper. (*Martin brings them*). The

circumstance of Mrs. Gerald's loss has become public, and public shall be the examination—you know the facts—

Mal. Ay, ay—you had better apply to my Clerk—give him the usual fee, and he'll soon settle the business.

Ger. Apply to your Clerk! Mr. Malcour, your Clerk! If I were a Justice, and received the salary, I should consider it my duty to do the work, and not injure my conscience or my country, by leaving matters of such importance to a deputy.

Mal. Well, well—shall I take the pen?

Ger. Yes, and that chair likewise—Friends, come forward—I will not leave a chance for calumny to hang a doubt upon.

(Malcour takes his seat—the rest arrange themselves).

Ger. Now, wife, your deposition.

Mar. Mr. Malcour, now he is perch'd there, looks like a crow upon a woolsack—

Mal. Silence in the Court!

I'll write the usual preamble, and then we'll begin.

Mar. He had better not begin with me. I'll stand none of his nonsense.

Mal. All your domestics must be question'd in rotation.

Mar. Oh, I am not afraid of being questioned.

Ann. Nor I certainly.

Mal. Now we proceed. Mrs. Gerald declares that a silver spoon, her property, has been stolen—

Dame G. I declared no such thing—I did not say it was stolen.

Mar. No, she didn't say it was stolen.

Mal. Silence! 'tis the regular mode of proceeding—Now, Mrs. Gerald, inform us, if you please, who has the care of your plate.

Dame G. Annette.

Mal. So, so, my pretty lass, I didn't expect this—strong presumption against the said Annette (*writes*).

Ann. Against me!—Not against me!

Mal. Yes, against you.—The name of her family?

Ger. Granville—But remark, Mrs. Gerald does not accuse Annette.

Dame G. No; understand that,—I have no proof, nor do I say it was her.

Mal. No, no, you do not say it was her; but as the said Annette is in your confidence, and had the care of said plate, your suspicions must naturally fall upon said Annette.

Mar. Must! you may call that law, but I'll be hanged if it's justice.

Ann. Oh, Madam! Oh, Mr. Gerald! pray speak for me. I have never, never wronged you,—indeed, I have been faithful—indeed, indeed I am innocent—(*In pulling out her handkerchief to wipe her tears, the money which she received from the Jew, falls*).

Mal. What's that?—Money!

Ann. Yes, it is mine—it is mine (*she picks it up*).

Ger. Yours, Annette!—I thought you had sent all you had to your father?

Dame G. And so she did, to my certain knowledge, eight days ago.

Mar. Aptly remembered, good Mrs. Gerald—this is a new corroboration (*writing*).

Ger. Annette, I trust you can explain this.

Mar. Stay, don't spoil the paper with a pack of lies of your own—I know that this money is Miss Annette's, and I know too *where* she got it.

Ger. I rejoice to hear that—speak, Martin.

Mal. In the first place—

Mar. Hold your tongue—Godfather told me

to speak—not you—Old Benjamin the Jew gave it to her this very morning.

Dame G. I am very glad of it—that is sufficient.

Mal. Not quite.

Ger. Why, it's very clear.

Mal. Not quite—I beg to remark, that a poor pedlar is not in the habit of giving his money for nothing.

Ger. That is true—Tell me, Annette, what it was you sold, of three crowns value?

Mal. In the mean time, hand the money to me (*Clerk takes it from her, and gives it to Mal-cour*).—I will be accountable according to custom (*puts it in his pocket*).

Mar. According to custom! good bye to it then.

Ann. Oh, do not take it from me—its destination is sacred—'tis honestly and truly mine—have pity on my despair—I am innocent—indeed I am innocent (*running to Gerald, and falling on her knees*).

Ger. I believe you, Annette, sincerely; but—

Mal. Mr. Gerald, excuse me. This money is no doubt the produce of the article that has been stolen—'tis an affair that comes under the jurisdiction of the Grand Judge; and, unluckily for the culprit, he is this day expected; so tremble—

Ger. Hold, Sir! 'tis the duty of every man in your situation, to support and protect the accused, not terrify and brow-beat her into an appearance of criminality—Remember, Mr. Mal-cour, that Justice always appears most beautiful when she is most merciful. It seems to me necessary to send for the principal, I mean Benjamin the Jew—Martin, you bring him.

Mar. I will, I will. [Exit Martin.

Ann. Oh, yes ; pray send for him.

Mal. There can be no objection—for he'll make matters still worse. (*Aside*).

Ann. Oh, father, if I might speak ! (*Aside*).

Hen. (*without*). Who is it dares accuse her !

Ann. Ah, Henry ! (*Shuddering*).

Enter HENRY.

Hen. Father ! what mockery is this ?—accuse Annette of theft—of meanly pilfering !

Ann. Do not believe it, Henry—I entreat *you* not to believe it.

Hen. Never, my beloved—never will I do so great an injury to her, whose gentleness, and truth, have fixed for ever my confidence, my love !

Dame G. Henry !—

Hen. Yes, mother ; my honour, and my heart, alike are pledged, and I swear to shield,—protect her with my life.

Dame G. I'm astonish'd !—but this is no time to talk.

Ger. The best and only time, good wife. You will find advocates enough where fortune smiles ; but he is the most worthy, who fearlessly stands forth the friend of the oppressed and helpless.

Hen. And might not you, dear Sir, have been that friend ? Why did you expose my dear Annette to the malice of a man whose integrity at least is doubtful ?

Mal. Doubtful, doubtful !—read, Sir, read the proofs.

Hen. Proofs ! father ?—are there proofs ?

Ger. I *hope* not.

Mal. There, Sir, I think that paper will fully ascertain my character. (*Giving the Proceedings to Henry*).

Hen. I do not doubt it. (*Looking over the Paper*). Are these your proofs? Contemptible!—because a paltry piece of plate by accident is lost, you must conclude she stole it! But the Grand Judge (well versed in honour and humanity) will sentence heavily, a wretch who would thus sacrifice an innocent girl at the shrine of error and malignity. (*Throws back the Paper*).

Mal. Bless my soul! this has taken an ugly turn.

Mar. Come along, come along!—here he is—I've brought him. (*Martin drags in the Jew*).

Mal. The Jew!—all's well again.

Benj. Pray, Mr. Martin, have compassion, and don't tear ma cloathes—Ey, te Justice here! and Martin not to tell me—the next time he puy a razor of me, I'll shave him to the pone. (*Aside—Gerald and the rest resume their places*).

Mal. Now, Mr. Jew, answer to the questions I am about to put—at present I am Judge.

Benj. Inteed! I wish mit all my heart, Justice may never again find so pad a representative.

Hen. Speak the truth, and fear nothing.

Benj. I shall.

Mal. Tell me your name—How are you called?

Benj. Te peoples call me Benjamin—shall I tell vat they calls you?

Mal. No evasions—what is your profession?

Benj. I'm a marchant.

Mal. Ah! commonly call'd a pedlar.

Benj. Yes, by plaguards.

Mal. Do you ever lend money?

Benj. In the way of pusiness.

Mal. Do you ever give money?

Benj. Yes—on cood security.

Mal. Ey! where do you find security for money that you give?

Benj. In the acknowledgment of my own heart—a clear conscience is petter as a clear estate.

Ger. Do you know this young woman?

Benj. Vat, Miss Annette? I am proud to acknowledge that I do—she is a cood girl—and a fair dealer.

Mal. A dealer! oh—now we come to the point.

Ger. What was the article you purchased of her this morning for three crowns?

Benj. It was a shilver spoon. (*All betray emotion*).

Ger. A silver spoon!

Mal. Good! (*writing*).

Hen. Annette! is this—

Ann. The truth, Henry—nothing but the truth—but produce that spoon, Benjamin—shew it—compare it—my life—my good name—*all* depends on that.

Benj. It's quite impossible, ma tear. I popped him into a crusible, and melted him down immediately.

Mar. Then I wish you had popped in after it, with all my soul.

Ger. Tell me, Annette—on your answer all must depend—how came that spoon in your possession? Who gave it to you?

Ann. I must not, dare not speak.

Hen. Distraction!

Ger. 'Tis too evident! This mystery confirms it; and painful, agonizing as I feel the confession, I am bound in duty, in justice, to admit—this looks like guilt.

Mal. I commit her.

Hen. Commit her, commit Annette to prison!

Dame G. She shall not stir—it was my property, and I forgive her.

Ger. Wife, your compassion comes too late; 'tis no longer you, but public justice, that must be satisfied—miserable, infatuated girl! one word may clear your fame, and still you hesitate.

Ann. Press me no further—I ought—I must be silent.

Mal. Lead on, then.

(*Malcour speaks with an Officer, who goes out*).

Hen. Stay yet a moment—quick, mother, bring one of the same set from which this in question has been lost.

(*Mrs. Gerald runs to the Buffet, and returns with a Spoon—Gerald, Martin, and Villagers draw near, and anxiously regard the responses of Benjamin*).

Hen. Now, on your oath, declare, was that you purchased of Annette this morning, plain or fluted?

Benj. It was fluted. (*The group express sorrow*).

Hen. Had it a cypher?

Benj. Let me think a moment—Yes, yes—Dere was a cypher.

Hen. And you remember the letter?

Benj. I do—G—G, was the letter.

Ann. (*Apart*). Oh fatal coincidence!—Granville and Gerald!—the initials are the same!

Hen. One question more, and I have done. (*Snatches the Spoon from them, and presenting it to Benjamin*)—Here, take it, examine it—the make, the pattern, the—remember on your oath—

Benj. (*In great agitation, after looking at it, and fixing a look of pity on Annette, exclaims*) As I hope for mercy, to the best of my remembrance, they are alike! (*Pause—Soldiers enter*).

Ann. Henry!

Hen. Oh, Annette! I loved, I adored you! you have destroyed my happiness—you have destroyed yourself:—yet still I love you. (*He throws himself into his Father's arms*).

Ann. I am unfortunate, but on my soul not guilty. (*The Soldiers lay hold of her*). Oh, Henry, do not forsake me!—as Heaven is my witness, I am innocent—I am innocent!

(*Music—They lead her back as she speaks—Henry attempts to follow her; is withheld by Gerald—Mrs. Gerald hides her face with her handkerchief—the Jew appears overwhelmed with grief; and Martin broken hearted—The Curtain falls on the picture*).

END OF ACT II.

A C T I I I .

SCENE I.

The Prison—ANNETTE discovered.

(*Music, as the Curtain rises.*)

Ann. O, my poor father!—What will become of him! When the story of his daughter's shame shall strike a deeper, deadlier wound upon his heart, he'll sink at once beneath afflictions, already too severe for nature to support.—Long ere this, he will have sought in the appointed spot—

he will have sought in vain, and think perhaps that my neglect, my inattention—No—no, he could never think unkindly of his child—he will know some accident has prevented my obedience, and wait until to-morrow! he must not again be disappointed—one way is left—this Cross!—but to whom can I apply, in whom can I confide—Mr. Gerald? Henry?—no—it would excite enquiries which I dare not answer—increase suspicions that may at last destroy me. (*Martin heard at the Portal with Bertrand*).

Ber. You can't see her—'tis impossible.

Mar. I know its impossible while you keep the door locked.

Ann. Ah! Martin—to him I may entrust it, (*Takes the Cross from her neck*)—his affection and simplicity will secure both success and secrecy.

Enter BERTRAND and MARTIN—BERTRAND points to ANNETTE, and exit.

Mar. There she stands, poor girl!—as patient as a lamb, and as innocent, I'll be sworn, as I am. I shall never be able to speak to her.

Ann. Martin, my good Martin! I was wishing much to see you—it may be the last time!

Mar. Oh, Miss Annette, don't talk in that way.

Ann. It is in your power to render me a most essential service.

Mar. In mine!

Ann. In yours alone.—You observed that they took from me this morning, the money, for which I had the greatest necessity—

Mar. Oh, yes—but that was quite regular—however, I am glad they took it.

Ann. Glad!

Mar. Very—(*Putting his hand in his Pocket*) For as I helped to get you into trouble, it is but fair that I should do my best to get you out again—so I broke open my box—and if there is enough (*She puts it away*)—Oh pray, pray, take it, for I'm sure if it doesn't help to do you service, I shall never live to enjoy it—(*Ready to cry*).

Ann. No, Martin, I only wish you to advance a sum equal to that I have lost, and carry it where I desire you—At the end of the village, a little way on the road to Paris, there is an old willow—

Mar. I know it very well—Lord! that willow was growing there when I was a little boy—it was in climbing that tree—

Ann. Well, well—in the hollow of that tree, I would have you deposit this money—

Mar. Put money in a hollow tree!—why you don't mean to say—

Ann. You promised not to ask—This little Cross is their full value—take it.

Mar. Not I,—I'll not touch it—pray do not think me such a brute as to take it from you—now!—

Ann. Then I must not accept your services.

Mar. Ah, but I know what is to be done, and it shall be done—you can't get out to prevent me.

Ann. Alas, no!

Mar. Confound my tongue! (*Vexed at himself*). Oh, Annette, my heart is so full, and my head so empty, that I can feel for you—but I can't talk to you—(*Greatly affected*).

Ann. Good fellow! be comforted. One thing else, and then farewell!—This ring I have plaited with my own hair—give it to Henry—tell him that my last wish—my latest prayer—tell him to pity—not to despise me.

Mar. If I stay a moment longer I shall blubber like a baby—Good bye, Annette—good bye, but I'm sure we shall meet again—

Ann. Beyond a doubt—we shall !

Mar. Oh ! oh !—

Mal. (without). “Let the Officers wait till I have spoken with the prisoner.”

BERTRAND hurries in.

Ber. Stand aside, man, stand aside—here's the Justice.

Ann. Farewell, Martin !—remember your promise—

Mar. Oh, Oh !

(Bertrand puts Martin back, and as Malcour enters and advances, they go out of the Prison).

Mal. Must make the most of my time—if she'll consent, I know my course—discover a flaw in the record—Young woman, I am come to inform you, that the Grand Judge has taken an account of the evidence, and in a few minutes you will be brought to trial.

Ann. To trial !—me to trial ! I am innocent—you know I am innocent.

Mal. Pardon me—don't know, but am willing to believe—I wish to serve you, to clear your character, to prove myself your friend—and on certain conditions—

Ber. (Advancing suddenly). Mr. Gerald !

Mal. Confound him, he has interrupted proceedings—in one word, will you accept my assistance ?

Ann. No, Sir!—Assistance never can be valuable, when proffer'd by a villain!

Mal. It's all over then!

Enter GERALD, with a Paper—He speaks to BERTRAND.

Ger. Malcour here! no matter—this paper admits me to your prisoner. This is an order which must be executed, strictly and rigorously—'tis from the Grand Judge (*Exit Bertrand*) Ah, my poor girl!

Ann. O Sir, do not abandon me—I am without a friend—almost without hope!

Ger. (Aside). I must be firm—Annette, forgive me, that I am forced to doubt—do not think me cruel—the strength of the accusations, and your unaccountable refusal to confute them, weigh heavy on my heart, and curbs each thought that rises to proclaim you innocent—open then your soul—tell me—by what fatality you have thus involved yourself?

Ann. A vow—that never shall be broken—chains my utterance—the secret is not mine—I can prove nothing, produce nothing in my defence:—one only witness might have cleared me, but now! even his evidence would not avail—he would be consider'd an accomplice, and lose himself, without releasing me.

Ger. That oath cannot be binding, which affects your life—the danger you are in, absolves it.

Ann. Never, never! (*Malcour advances*).

Mal. It is near the hour of trial, Mr. Gerald.

Ger. Check your impatience, Sir—when your own hour of trial comes, you will not be so

eager (*Malcour retreats amazed*)—Annette, I am come to lead you to your Judge—'tis I that must denounce you at 'the tribunal—and—unforeseen necessity, 'tis I must there stand forth your prosecutor!

Ann. You!

Ger. It will be your last examination—I dread to tell you with what rapidity the sentences of this Court are pronounced and executed—if you refuse to speak—it may be possible—that this day—

Ann. I may be condemn'd!

Ger. Yes!

Ann. Then—I must seek resignation in the joyful certainty, that when I am unconscious of the triumph, my innocence will appear beyond the shadow of a doubt. Your poor Annette may go dishonour'd to the grave, but tears of remorse and pity must fall to consecrate her memory.

Ger. What am I to think! reason, reflection, conviction—all are stagger'd by that air of truth—no, no, a guilty mind never yet possessed such calmness in such extremity.

Ann. Will you, dear Sir, without disguise, reply to one enquiry?—it would ease my almost broken heart.

Ger. Sincerely—I will.

Ann. Henry! your son!—if I should fall, what will be his thought?—

Ger. That your fate has been unmerited.

Ann. And you?—

Ger. I! I always consider every person innocent till they are proved guilty.

Ann. Then I shall not die without consolation!

Mal. Sorry to interrupt—but the Court is waiting, and—

Ger. You are too busy, Sir—I shall be responsible—

Mal. Not conscious of any deficiency in my duty, Mr. Gerald—

Ger. Except where interest and your passions prompt you to betray it—had Annette been more complying, you would have been less severe—but I know you, Sir, and the world will know you for a wretch, composed of more vice than folly—with just head enough to contrive crime, but not heart enough to feel its consequences—a reptile, dangerous in every stage of its existence, whose very atmosphere is infection, and whose very touch is poison. [*Exit Malcour.*

—Come, child, be composed—an upright Judge will never suffer an examination dictated by revenge, to weigh the tythe part of a hair, against a fellow creature's life.

BERTRAND enters with two Soldiers, who place themselves on each side of the Portal.

Bert. (In a subdued voice). The prisoner is summon'd.

Ann. I am ready—Come, conduct me.

Ger. Annette! my dear Annette! what imperious duty binds you to become your own destroyer, I cannot divine—but before we part, let me hope that the persuasion of your Judge will effect a disclosure that I have pleaded for in vain—remember, on this point your life depends—not only yours—Henry! the lover of your heart—my poor boy's—

Ann. Oh, Heavens, do not augment my sorrows—do not drive me to despair!

Ger. Disclose, confess the truth! I entreat! I conjure you!—one hour hence it may be useless!

Ann. Then has hope forsaken me! (*Apart*).

That confession would cut at once the thread of a dear father's life! I must not think on't—no, never, never!

(Music—Bertrand again advances—as Gerald and Annette go off, he appears to entreat her, she still refusing—the Soldiers file after them, Bertrand following).

SCENE II.

The Village—on the left, a Church with Tower and Belfry—the Door of the Church a little open. On the right, the Court-House.—In front (also on the right) a Rustic Porch—the entrance to the Farm—a Sentinel at the back.

Enter EVRARD.

Ev. Disguise and terror both seem needless—I wander through the village unregarded, and the stragglers gaze upon me while I pass, as if they looked on vacancy. Grief is in every feature—in every movement a dejection that speaks some great calamity—yet wherefore should my mind forbode?—Illness, the want of secret opportunity, a thousand circumstances might prevent Annette from reaching the appointed spot.

Benj. *(Descending the Steps of the Court-house).* Oh, 'tis a cruel prejudice—they drive me from the door—abuse me—call me names.

Ev. A stranger—a wandering outcast like myself. I may accost him safely. *(Apart, and listening).*

Benj. Pless ma heart, pless ma heart! 'tis so heavy, I can hardly move mit it, and my poor old eyes vater so, I can hardly see my vay—but

somehow, I always loved her: whenever I came to te village, it was te happiest day in te whole year; and I rejoiced more at losing fifty per cent. to her, that I did to gain a hundred from any pody else. Poor Annette! Poor Annette!

Ev. Annette! just Heaven! let me be patient—the name is common—and it may be possible—

Benj. I shall never drive anoder pargain mit advantage—my spirits are quite proke—I shall be a pankrupt mitout a farthing in the pound—ma trade will go to te divel, and I shall go to te dogs.

Ev. Friend!

Benj. Ey! I am not your friend—I am no pody's friend—the only friend I had, when I most wish'd to serve, I ruined—I'll never ruin anoder.

Ev. Of whom are you speaking?

Benj. A poor girl vat they have just taken to trial.

Ev. To trial!—on what pretence?—

Benj. They call her tief—say she has betrayed her trust, and stole her mistress' property—But its a lie!—its an abominable lie!—she never betray'd a human being—she never stole any ting, but the affections of those that knew her.

Ev. And her name is—

Benj. Annette—Annette Granville. (*Evrard starts back in agony, concealing his face with his Cloak*).

Ev. Dishonour'd! disgraced! (*Apart*).

Benj. Ah, I don't wonder you are sorry—every pody loves her as if she was their own child—but when her father hears it—'twill be a death-blow to his poor old heart.

Ev. Oh!—(*Evrard groans*).

Benj. Come, come, restrain your passions—

you are not her father, are you?—Vat right have you to make yourself so miserable?

(Benjamin wipes his eyes, and retires on one side, to recover himself).

Ev. Support, sustain me! let me but await the sentence of my child with fortitude, and all shall be accomplished—I have been proud in honesty—content in an unblemish'd character—blessed in the affections of a lovely daughter—Bitter, bitter reflection!—I must resign them all—I must have no child to comfort my declining age—no country but the desert—no home, but in the grave! [*Exit Evrard.*]

Benj. Ah, dere's Martin coming.

Enter MARTIN.

Mar. Three crowns in a hollow tree! there can be no security in such a bank—the firm's rotten—but it's done—O! you are there, are you (*To Benjamin*)—We have made a pretty business of it between us.

Benj. When pad luck is to be had, I am always in te market—it has caused me more trouble as all my monish.

Mar. So it has me—but I've just got rid of some, (*pulls out money*)—Now I'll count how much trouble I have left—(*sits on a bench by the porch*).

Benj. Vat's all dat?

Mar. Money—I thought the sight of it would brighten up your countenance—(*beginning to count*).

Benj. Shall I count it for you, ma tear?

Mar. No, I thank you—I am richer than I thought I was. This fine new half-crown piece was poor Annette's (*the Magpie appears at the Gate*).

Benj. Annette's!—how much do you ask for him?

Mar. I'll never sell it—'twas her keepsake—and no living creature shall ever take it from me.

Pie. Martin! Martin!

Mar. Ey! that rascally bird again—get away, you brute, go! (*throws Hat at Bird, who flies back to enclosure*)—even that Magpie bore false witness against her, poor girl—but I wish you wouldn't talk of her—I shall never be able to keep count if you do—one, two, three—I suppose you know that rogue of a Justice is found out at last.

Benj. Found out! Vat! is te tog discovered? Come, come, tings look better—but can te news be depented upon?

Mar. To be sure it can—he has embezzled the public money, and been committed to prison. He'll be transported, to a certainty.

Benj. So shall I—mit delight, mit joy! Oh, I'm a good man again!—I'll go and tell Annette all vat—Oh tear, I forgot, I forgot.

Mar. (*Comes forward*). I wish you had forgot—plague on't, you have put me out again.

(*During the foregoing, the Magpie perches on the Bench, and flies away with the Half-crown piece*).

Benj. Ey! Look at te pird, look at te Magpie!

Mar. Stop thief, stop thief!—she has got my half-crown piece!

Benj. Vat a sensible pird—I wish I could get a nest of te young ones.

Mar. There she goes—confound her!

Benj. Vell, I've heard a great teal about money flying! but I never saw it fly before—Ah! ah!

Mar. A devilish good joke, isn't it!—but its as old as you are—See! see! she is gone into that hole in the belfry window—if I could but scramble up—Ah, the door is open! Come, come and help me.—(*They go in*).

(*Music—The Officers of Justice, with Soldiers, and the Villagers, come from the Court-house—Annette in custody, as having been found guilty—as she passes the Church-porch she kneels, faints; and is led off by one of the Soldiers, the Crowd following*).

(*Evrard comes forward*).

Ev. All is over, all is concluded! they return with her to prison!

(*Henry descends the steps of the Court-house, followed by Gerald and his Wife—Martin at the same time is seen going up to the Belfry*).

Hen. O, 'tis a stain upon the name of Justice, that never can be cancelled—Leave me, father—dear mother, let me pass—I must, I will, see and speak to her.

Dame G. No, no; come in; come homewith us.

Ger. Henry, I command you!—why inflict upon her heart another, and an unavailing pang?

Hen. Oh torture! there was no proof! all was surmise. The evidence was circumstantial, not positive, and yet they have condemned her!

Ev. Condemned! speak, tell me! what is her sentence?

Ger. Who demands it?

Dame G. Ah! I know him well, I remember his features—'tis Granville!

Her. How!—Her father!

Ev. Aye, her distracted—her heart-broken father!

Ger. Miserable man! at what a time!

Ev. Let me know the worst—I am prepared. (*Gerald turns from him*).—Nay, do not agonise me by suspense.

Hen. Hear it then from me. (*Evrard grasps his hand*)—they have sentenced her—to death!

Ev. Death!

(*Martin looking from the Belfry*).

Mar. Holloa! stop, stop! come back, come back! Annette is innocent! Annette is innocent! (*He pulls the Bell violently*).

(*The Crowd return*)—Huzza! huzza!

Mar. Annette is innocent!—I've found the Fork! I've found the Spoon!—Annette is innocent!

Crowd. Huzza! huzza!

Ev. Merciful Providence!

Hen. Innocent! Who affirms it?

Mar. I—I affirm it—here are the very things we have lost—(*Benjamin comes from the Door of the Church*)—She is innocent! I can swear to them, and I will swear to them!

Benj. So will I—I'll take my oath of 'em when I see 'em.

Ger. Throw them down—quick, Martin, quick!

Dame G. Into my apron. (*She holds her apron, and Martin throws them*)—As I live, the very same! Here is the Fork lost a fortnight ago—and here, the very Spoon that has caused us all this misery.

Hen. Annette! thou art mine again! (*Rushes through the Crowd*).

Ger. Oh joyful discovery!—they are indeed the same!

Ev. (*Who has listened with anxiety*) What said you—a spoon—a silver spoon?

Ger. Aye!—

Ev. And Annette—

Ger. Disposed of one exactly similar this morning early—but for what purpose, no power could force her to disclose.

Ev. (*Clasping his hands*). It was to save her father! Oh, generous, exalted girl! to shield the life of the deserter Evrard, she would have sacrificed her own!

Ger. Evrard! Evrard!—speak, are you known by the name of Evrard?

Ev. I am.

Ger. Then be happy, for all is well—The villain Malcour is dismissed. I have been appointed Magistrate in his place, and rejoice to tell you, that among his papers, I found this—which annuls the Order for your apprehension.

Ev. Gerald!—do you mean—

Ger. Yes, Granville, you are pardon'd, your Captain generously confessed that he had provoked the insult which you offered;—with his own hand he drew up a Memorial, and presented it to the King—the King has signed it, and you are pardon'd.

Mar. Come out, you villain!—(*Bringing the Magpie from the Belfry-tower, and holding it from above the Porch.*)—Here, godmother, here's the thief! your darling devil of a Magpie!—Benny, my boy, set the bell ringing for joy, and bring all the neighbours to hear the news!

(*Benjamin pulls the Bell—Huzza's! repeated by the Crowd—Henry bears Annette in his arms to the Front, followed by the multitude, exclaiming, "Annette is innocent! Annette is innocent!"—Annette rushes into her Father's embrace*)—

Ev. Annette! my dear child!—

Ann. Oh, Father!—Father!—

Crowd. Huzza! huzza! She is innocent, she is innocent!

Ger. Now friends, follow us. Those who have sympathised in our afflictions, have the best right to partake of our felicity; and while we celebrate this happy triumph of innocence and virtue,—let us not forget the danger of trusting to appearances—but learn to accuse with caution, and condemn with justice.

Crowd. Huzza! huzza!—

(*The Characters form Tableau, and the Curtain falls.*)

THE END.





